

IN THE CLAIMS

The status of each claim is provided below:

Claims 1-8: (Canceled).

9. (Currently Amended): A method for producing nucleoside 5'-phosphate ester, comprising the steps of culturing a bacterium belonging to *Escherichia coli* having an ability to produce nucleoside 5'-phosphate ester, in which *ushA* gene and *aphA* gene ~~do not function normally~~ is decreased as compared to a wild type strain by mutating or disrupting the *ushA* gene and the *aphA* gene, in a medium to produce an accumulate nucleoside 5'-phosphate ester in a medium, and collecting the nucleoside 5'-phosphate ester from the medium, wherein the nucleoside 5'-phosphate ester is selected from the group consisting of ~~5'-inosinic acid~~ inosine 5'-phosphate ester and ~~5'-guanylic acid~~ guanosine 5'-phosphate ester.

Claim 10: (Canceled).

11. (New) The method according to Claim 9, wherein the bacterium is further transformed with the mutant *purF* gene coding for PRPP amidotransferase of which feedback inhibition by AMP and GMP is desensitized.

12. (New) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the bacterium is further transformed with the *guaA* gene and the *guaB* gene.

13. (New) The method according to Claim 9, wherein the nucleoside 5'-phosphate ester is inosine 5'-phosphate ester.

14. (New) The method according to Claim 9, wherein the nucleoside 5'-phosphate ester is guanosine 5'-phosphate ester.

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

The amendments to Claim 9 and newly-added Claims 11-14 are supported by the specification, particularly Examples 6 and 7, and the original claims. Accordingly, no new matter is believed to have been added to the present application by the amendments submitted above.